GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:237
ANSWERED ON:04.12.2002
TELEPHONE SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS
JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA;VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the telephone tariff and security deposit in the rural areas are now at par with those in the urban areas due to recent hike in tariffs;

(b) if so, whether the Government are contemplating to review and reverse the hike;

(c) if so, the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to improve the telephone services in the rural areas?

Answer

THE MINISTER FOR PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PI MAHAJAN)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STA QUESTION NO. 237 FOR 4TH DECEMBER, 2002 REGARDING TELEPHONE SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.

(a) No, Sir. Telephone tariff, viz. Registration, Rental, Unit call charges, Local call charges and Security Deposit are all lower in rural areas as compared with the tariff applicable in urban areas.

(b) to (d): Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(e) Telecom Services in rural areas are being maintained satisfactorily. However, there are certain areas where due to inadequate infrastructure, law & order problems, erratic power supply etc., some difficulties are observed. Following steps have been taken by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited to further improve telecommunication services in rural areas:

(i) Introduction of modern technologies like Wireless in Local Loop, CDOT/PMP and satellite communication in rural areas.

(ii) All rural telephone exchanges have been converted to electronic exchanges.

(iii) For better STD services, reliable transmission media is being provided.

(iv) Regular testing of VPTs (Village Public Telephones) from telephone exchanges and the formation of core groups in each SSA (Secondary Switching Area) for prompt restoration of VPTs.

(v) Replacement in phased manner of instruments having completed their expiry period.

(vi) Provision of generator sets to take care of long duration power breakdowns.